



Joseph C. Kovars

Shareholder

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Joe Kovars is the former co-chair of Baker Donelson's Construction Group.

Mr. Kovars concentrates his practice in construction and public contracts law. He is the former co-chair of Baker Donelson's Construction Group.

He represents contractors, subcontractors, designers, sureties and owners in contract formation, and construction disputes involving many types of construction projects.

Mr. Kovars' experience as first chair litigator in large and complex cases includes appearances before federal and state courts, trial and appellate levels, boards of contract appeals and the comptroller general. He also acts as an arbitrator and mediator in resolving disputes.

He has extensive experience with contract interpretation disputes, delay and impact claims, contract terminations, bid protests, mechanics' liens, bond claims and injunctions. Mr. Kovars has participated in approximately 80 arbitrations as an arbitrator and as an attorney.

Mr. Kovars has been recognized in several publications as one of the leading attorneys in construction law, including being listed in *Chambers USA* for Maryland Construction Law. He is also a fellow of the American College of Construction Lawyers, where he sits on the Board of Governors (2022 – 2024). Mr. Kovars is also the editor-in-chief of the *Maryland Construction Law Deskbook* (3rd Ed., 2023 Maryland State Bar Association). In addition, Mr. Kovars was named the Best Lawyers 2025 Construction Litigation and 2024 Construction Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Baltimore by *The Best Lawyers in America*.®

Professional Honors & Activities

Professional Memberships

- Member – American Bar Association
 - Forum on the Construction Industry
 - Former Member, Governing Committee
 - Section on Public Contract Law
 - Litigation Section
 - Construction Cases Committee
- Certified by the [American Arbitration Association](#) as Construction Industry Arbitrator, Advanced Training
- Certified by the Maryland State Bar Association as a mediator, 40 hours training
- Member – District of Columbia Bar Association
 - Section on Government Contracts
- Member – Maryland State Bar Association
 - Construction Law Section
 - Public Contracts Law Committee
 - Past Co-chair

Honoraries

- Listed in *Maryland Super Lawyers*, Construction Litigation (2007 – 2013, 2015 – 2026); Construction (2014, 2020); Real Estate (2014)

- Listed in *Chambers USA* as a leading Construction lawyer in Maryland (2021 – 2025)
- Listed in *The Legal 500*, Construction (2015)
- Fellow – American College of Construction Lawyers (2014 – present)
 - Board of Governors (2022 – 2024)
- Listed in *The International Who's Who of Construction Lawyers* (2013, 2015, 2019, 2020)
- Listed in *Who's Who Legal: Thought Leaders* – Construction (2019, 2020, 2024)
- Listed since 2003 in *The Best Lawyers in America®*, Construction and Litigation – Construction Categories; named the Best Lawyers® 2025 and 2015 Litigation – Construction "Lawyer of the Year" in Baltimore; named the Best Lawyers® 2024 Construction Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Baltimore
- AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Fellow – American Bar Foundation

Professional Background

- Principal, Ober|Kaler
- Partner, Blum, Yumkas, Mailman, Gutman & Denick, P.A.
- Associate and Partner, Braude & Margulies
- Law Clerk, the Honorable Judge John P. Wiese, U.S. Court of Claims

Publications

- Contributor – "50-State Survey of Licensed Design Professional's Stamping and Sealing Obligations" (April 2025)
- Contributor – "50-State Survey of Firm Licensure Requirements for Architectural and Engineering Firms," ABA Forum on Construction Law – Division 3 – Design (April 2025)
- "AAA Amends its Construction Industry Arbitration Rules," republished in *The Legal Intelligencer* (March 2024)
- Editor – "Maryland Construction Law Deskbook," Construction Law Section, Maryland State Bar Association, Third Edition (2023)
- "Federal Court Affirms Ebola Case: What Does it Mean for Projects Impacted by COVID-19?" (June 14, 2021)
- Author and Editor – "Construction Subcontracting: A Comprehensive Practical and Legal Guide," *American Bar Association* (2014)

Speaking Engagements

- Presenter – "Change Orders in Maryland," Lorman Education Services (2014)
- Presenter – "Construction Contracting for Embassy Officials," DMS Construction Consulting Services (2013)
- Co-presenter – "The Do's and Don'ts of Government Construction Contracts," Webinar, Ober|Kaler (2012)
- Presenter – "Fundamentals of Construction Law: What to Do When the Project Stops," Forum on the Construction Industry and Center for Professional Development, American Bar Association (2012)

Education

- George Washington University Law School, J.D., 1978, with honors
- Boston University, B.A., 1975, magna cum laude

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland

- Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland